

# Breastfeeding Basics: Collecting and Storing Your Milk

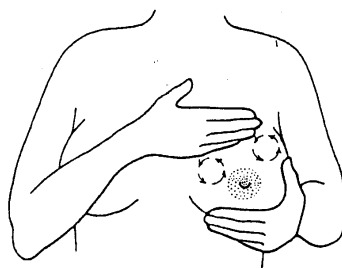


You can collect (express) your breast milk when you are unable to nurse your baby. This can be done using hand expression or a pump. Hand pumps are handy if you plan to express often. You can get one through the WIC clinic or from a drug store.

Wash the pump or container you will use to collect your milk in hot, soapy water. A margarine tub or a plastic coffee cup cone works well if you plan to use hand expression. With practice, you can express directly into a nurser bag/bottle.

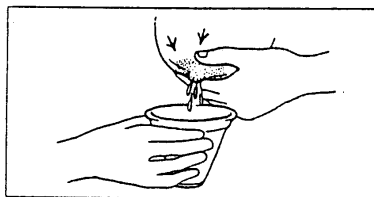
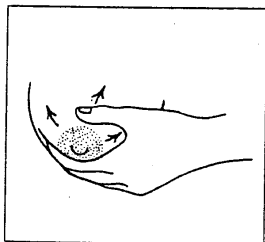
Begin by washing your hands. Put a warm washcloth on your breasts to help your milk flow (when you are first learning, you may want to practice in the shower).

Massage your breasts for a few minutes. Do this by placing one hand under your breast for support. Apply gentle pressure using a circular motion with your other hand. Massage from several starting points always working from the chest toward the nipple. Repeat on your other breast.



## Hand Expression

Place your fingers and thumb about 1 inch behind the nipple. Press back toward your ribs and squeeze in and down toward the nipple.



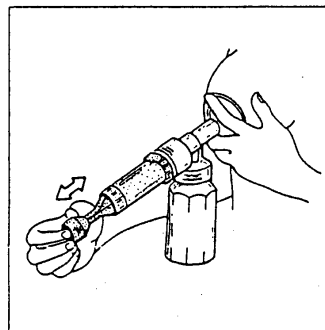
Move your hand around your breast and continue. Collect your milk into your clean container.

## Hand Pump

Pick out the right nipple adapter for your breast size (if available). Put it in the end of the pump.

Center this piece over your nipple and hold the pump in place.

With your other hand, gently pull the outer section of the pump to create suction.



Continue to pull in and out as milk starts dripping into the pump.

When milk flow slows down switch to your other breast. Then massage both breasts again and pump some more. Expressing your milk gets easier with practice and works best when your milk supply is built up. Don't be discouraged if you can express only an ounce at first.

## Storing Your Milk

1. Store your milk in a sterile hard plastic bottle or disposable nurser bag.
2. Put enough milk for 1 feeding in each nurser bag/bottle. Do not overfill. If you plan to freeze the milk, double bag it.
3. Label with the date on masking tape.
4. Your milk will last up to 48 hours in a refrigerator and 1 month in the back of a freezer that stays at zero degrees.
5. If you don't have a refrigerator or freezer close by when you collect your milk, pack your milk on ice in a container.
6. Use the oldest milk first.
7. To thaw frozen breastmilk, shake the bottle/bag gently while holding it under warm water. Do not boil or microwave it.
8. You can hand express or pump every three hours.

## Returning to Work or School

You can work or go to school and continue to breastfeed. Be creative and find what works for you! Here are three choices:

1. Find a babysitter or day care close to work or school. Go to your baby or have your baby brought to you to nurse.
2. Nurse before and after work or school. Hand express or pump your milk at work or school. Give your milk to the sitter to feed the next day.
3. Nurse before and after work or school. Have the sitter give your baby formula while you are gone. You may need to express milk during the day for comfort in the early weeks.

### If you want to continue offering your baby breastmilk only:

#### 2-4 Weeks Ahead of Time:

- \* Begin to express your milk a few times each day. Some women find it easy to nurse their baby on one breast, while expressing on the other. Try to follow the same schedule that you will use when you return to work or school. You can build up a frozen supply of breastmilk this way.
- \* Nurse and express in different places, such as the homes of relatives and friends. It will then be easier to nurse at the sitters and at work or school.
- \* When your baby is one month of age, begin offering a supplemental bottle of breastmilk. Your baby may accept the bottle better if someone else offers it.
- \* Develop your plan for combining work/school and breastfeeding.

#### A Few Days Ahead of Time:

Practice your breastfeeding routine:

- \* Take your baby (and breastmilk) to the day care/sitter.
- \* Nurse before you leave your baby and as soon as possible when you pick your baby up or arrive home.
- \* Write down your usual feeding times for the sitter and ask her to feed your baby near these times.
- \* Ask the sitter not to feed your baby right before you pick him/her up.
- \* Don't be surprised if your baby wants to nurse often when you are together. Try not to offer bottles, especially of formula, at these times. The more you nurse, the more milk you will have.
- \* Provide extra breastfeedings at night, and on your days off.

### If you want to offer your baby breastmilk and formula:

#### 2-4 Weeks Ahead of Time:

Choose an iron-fortified formula.

Slowly begin offering formula for those feeding that you will be away from your baby.

Each week, replace no more than one daily breastfeeding with formula.

**Whatever time you spend nursing is good for your and your baby.**